

to find our way into, and out of, the mazes of evolution." In reply, I ask whether he has refused to modify his beliefs on the mechanism of the universe, or on the structure of matter, in accordance with the progress of theories in those subjects. Natural selection is a theory, not a fixed law, and its validity in various respects has been challenged by numerous competent biologists.

What I must chiefly conclude from adverse comments on my paper is that certain people dislike having their beliefs at all disturbed.

W. L. MCATEE.

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To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—Mr. McAtee hits the right nail on the head when he says that "certain people dislike having their beliefs at all disturbed." They are generally people with a distorted perspective.

I shall not attempt to adopt the crude style of invective which apparently affords such relief to the feelings of Mr. McAtee. It must suffice to say that I do not, for one moment, question his statements of *fact*, but what I did question, in my review, was his evident lack of ability to interpret them. And this attitude I still maintain.

His defence of his use of the terms "clams" and "oysters" is puerile. If he considers that there is any merit in his discovery that "there

is more information on the food habits of vertebrates in my paper . . . than there ever has been in the works of Darwin, and of the whole school of selectionists put together," he is, of course, perfectly free to do so. But I can assure him his contention will leave the "whole school of selectionists" quite cold.

It would be idle, on my part, to attempt to persuade Mr. McAtee of the crudity of his conceptions of the habits of Geometer-moths, and I do not propose to waste time in attempting the task.

In effect Mr. McAtee insists that, like the famous "Bell-man," "what I tell you three times is true." There was an excuse for the Bell-man; but Mr. McAtee should have realized, long ago, that an abusively blustering attitude is neither dignified, nor befitting discussions which are supposedly to promote the search for Truth, and the Advancement of Science.

Mr. McAtee has laboriously collected for us a most impressive and most valuable mass of facts concerning the food of birds; for which he is entitled to the sincere thanks of all who are concerned with this theme. But his deductions drawn from these facts I considered, and still consider, entirely erroneous, and in this I have the whole weight of Scientific opinion behind me. His estimate of my qualifications to express an opinion on this theme does not interest me. Nor does it affect my arguments in the slightest.

W. P. PYCRAFT.



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